



New Castle Crier

The official newsletter of New Castle City

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New Castle, Delaware

June 2007

City moves forward on 07/08 budget preparation

Now is the time each year when City personnel put together budget requests for the coming fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Requests are then discussed at City Council budget workshops, meetings held at the Town Hall (201 Delaware Street) which are open to the public.

Expenses

For the current 2006/07 City budget, total expenses are slated to be a little more than \$4.8M. The City has three main department budgets.

Ms. Marian Delaney is in charge of finance and human resources. Mr. Frank DiSabatino runs operations for public services, which includes public works (snow and ice control, refuse collection and maintenance for streets and parks), building, housing code enforcement, planning and zoning. Finally, Police Chief Kevin McDerby manages all operations related to public safety and police.

Breaking the current budget down, expenses for finance/HR are about \$240K, a little more than \$1.45M for public services and about \$1.77M for public safety. General administration in the

budget totals about \$435K. Insurance and other professional services are budgeted at about \$440K. Expenses related to the Trustees are nearly \$290K, which are offset by revenue received by the City from the Trustees.

Smaller segments in the budget include the Mayor (\$50K), Recreation (\$21K) and Board of Adjustment (\$16K). Other remaining items related to committees, commissions, Separation Day (offset by revenue) and a fund for future liabilities related to employees who leave the City make up the balance at a little more than \$110K.

Revenues

Like most municipalities, the majority of revenue on which the City relies comes from property taxes. The current budget includes around \$2.85M from this source. Contributions from the Trustees and Municipal Services Commission is our next largest source, at almost \$800K. Other grants and State aid money the City receives throughout the budget year totals just about \$700K.

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Sign Up For Recreation Program

The City's Summer Recreation Program begins Monday, July 9 and runs on weekdays through Friday, August 17. Hours are usually 8 a.m. to noon, however may run later on days with certain activities. Registration is open to children ages 5 through 12 who reside within the City limits. The program does not run on days when it rains. Typical activities include a Library visit, a tour of the Court House, bowling, swimming and other trips. Program packets with more details will be distributed at a later date.

Registration Fees: \$20 one child; \$30 two children; \$40 three/more
The fee **does not** cover individual trip costs.

Make check payable to:
Mayor and Council of New Castle

For walk-in registration, bring this completed form to the City office, 220 Delaware St., weekdays, beginning Monday, June 11 through Monday, June 18. Sign-up is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Or, complete card and mail by June 12 to:
City of New Castle, 220 Delaware St., New Castle, DE 19720. Call 322-9804 with any questions.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Emergency Phone No.: _____

Payment Amount Enclosed: _____

Low-interest loans are for some homeowners, landlords

Last month's newsletter reported on one County home repair grant program for which certain City residents may be eligible. The County also administers a similar program for the State. To be eligible, properties must be in need of State Housing Code-related repairs or be in need of handicap-accessible modifications.

Loans up to a maximum of \$35,000 per unit for owner-occupants are made at a 3 percent interest rate for a maximum 15 year term.

The table below shows the applicable income limits, in accordance with household size.

Persons who may be eligible and wish to participate should call the County at 395-5648,

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Loans are also available to eligible landlords up to a maximum amount of \$25,000 per unit at a 3 percent interest rate for a maximum 15 year term. To apply for this program, landlords must call the Delaware State Housing Authority directly at 577-5001.

<u>1 Person</u>	<u>2 Person</u>	<u>3 Person</u>	<u>4 Person</u>	<u>5 Person</u>	<u>6 Person</u>	<u>7 Person</u>	<u>8 Person</u>
\$58,075	\$66,355	\$74,635	\$84,915	\$89,585	\$96,140	\$102,810	\$109,480

City budget

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Fees for licenses and permits are more than \$240K. Additionally, the City receives two revenue line items at around \$90K each from cable franchise fees and fines from the State courts. The two final revenue sections of the budget, for about \$20K each, are generalized as investments and user fees.

There are many challenges the City will face with our new budget. Each year labor costs increase, usually around the rate of inflation. This does not account, however, for any added positions which may be requested to keep up with the demand for City services. Costs for employee benefits are another increase the City can count upon annually.

The City is hit, as well as everyone else, with soaring costs for fuel. Covering these costs in the 2007/08 budget will likely mean an increase in these related line items beyond inflation.

Check City Council agendas, on the bulletin board on the front of the City office building (220 Delaware Street) or

published in the *New Castle Weekly*, for when budget items will be discussed and decided by the City Council. Comments or questions concerning the budget may be directed to City Administrator Cathryn Thomas at 322-9812, or e-mail: cathrynthomas@newcastlecity.org.

The next
regular
City Council
meeting is 7 p.m.,
Tues., June 12 at
Town Hall

Property Tax Exemptions

For information on applying for the Over 65 or Disability exemption, call Marian Delaney at 322-9811. Yearly income requirements: \$12,500 single and \$25,000 married. Social Security is not counted. Last day to apply is June 15th.

Code Enforcement Corner

The City of New Castle Board of Health strives to keep properties in conformance with adopted rules and codes. To report any problems or file a complaint, please call Code Enforcement Officer John Lloyd at 302-323-6081. Complaint forms are also available on the City Web site at www.newcastlecity.org.

Common Spring and Summer property issues

- Citizens are reminded to keep grass cut on a regular basis and to keep exterior areas neat and clean.
- No vehicles or trailers are allowed on lawn areas.
- Sidewalks should be kept clear for pedestrian traffic.
- Animal waste should be cleaned up daily.
- If left out for periods of time, all varieties of food in a yard (human and pet) can attract rodents. Keep yards clear of these materials.